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LETTER DATED 1 NOVEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, issued on 30 October 1999 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia on 30 October 1999

The Special Envoy of H.E. Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of Algeria and Current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), H.E. Mr. Ahmed Ouyahia, leading an OAU delegation, had two meetings on 26 and 28 October with H.E. Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

The purpose of this latest visit by the Special Envoy to Addis Ababa, along with the one which the Envoy also made to Asmara, was to push forward the OAU peace process on the Ethio-Eritrean crisis.

At both meetings with Prime Minister Meles, the Special Envoy had extensive and comprehensive discussions and exchanges of views which were useful and constructive.

On both occasions, Prime Minister Meles underlined to the Special Envoy that the Technical Arrangements contained numerous points which were inconsistent with the OAU Framework Agreement and the Modalities and undermine the principle of return to the status quo ante. It was emphasized by the Prime Minister that Eritrea's withdrawal from Ethiopian territory occupied since May 1998 and the unequivocal restoration of the status quo ante is an issue of fundamental principle to Ethiopia which the Technical Arrangements, in their present form, fail to guarantee.

The Special Envoy took note of these concerns raised by the Prime Minister. A number of measures, both substantive and procedural, were discussed to address Ethiopia's concern. The talks were concluded with the understanding that the dialogue between Ethiopia and OAU will continue in the very near future.

On the other hand, Ethiopia, is not privy to what is discussed between the Special Envoy and the Eritrean authorities. Nonetheless, the contents of the statement issued on 28 October 1999 by the Eritrean Foreign Ministry is contrary, both in letter and spirit, to the thrust and content of the discussion between Prime Minister Meles and the Special Envoy of the OAU Chairman.

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